



Week 4 Assignment: Background – Developing Consensus and Addressing Challenges in your Action Research Plan

Overview

The first three weeks of this course have focused on exploring topics or questions for action research, examining background information on the topics and questions, and designing an action research plan to address the questions or topics you have identified. This week and the next will provide you an opportunity to review your draft action research plan, confer with your site supervisor and reach consensus on your question(s) or topic(s) and design of your action research plan.

You will also have an opportunity to study some additional strategies to sustain and support your action research. Remember, your action research plan, process, progress and project may take several weeks or several months to complete. One of the key goals of this course is providing an effective blueprint, a how to conduct an effective action research project in collaboration with your site supervisor(s), peers, Instructional Associates, and university faculty.

Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Examine research strategies designed to sustain action research.
- 2) Learn the process of reaching consensus with the site supervisor and university professor in the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the research design and implementation. (It should be noted that monitoring is designed to assist and support the student and site supervisor throughout the duration of the research project. The larger project or multiple smaller research projects will be completed during the 18-month internship for those students who have just completed EDLD 5311).

Performance Outcomes:

- 1) Describe research strategies to support and sustain ongoing action research.
- 2) Reach consensus with the site supervisor on the overall internship plan, including the action research plan to be implemented. (Note: The site supervisor must sign or use email verification of approval. The approved overall plan will be uploaded to the Electronic Portfolio).

Rubric

Use the following Rubric to guide your work on the Week 4 Assignment.

Tasks	Accomplished	Proficient	Needs Improvement
	The evidence suggests that this work is a "Habit of Mind." The educator is ready to mentor others in this area.	The evidence suggests that performance on this work matches that of a strong educator.	The evidence does not yet make the case for the educator being proficient at this task.
Action Research – Identifying strategies to support and sustain action research	<p>Student provides a clear description of the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Force field analysis • Delphi method • Nominal group techniques <p>Student also discusses how he or she can use these strategies to improve their action research plan.</p> <p>(4 Points)</p>	<p>Student briefly describes at least two of the strategies, but does not discuss how the strategies may improve his or her action research plan.</p> <p>(2 Points)</p>	<p>Student only describes one strategy and does not discuss how the strategies may improve his or her action research plan.</p> <p>(1 Point)</p>
CARE Model and your Action Research Plan	<p>Student clearly addresses all areas of the CARE Model and provides at least two points under each of the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns • Affirmations • Recommendations • Evaluations <p>(8 – 10 Points)</p>	<p>Student addresses each of the areas of the CARE Model but provides less than two points under each of the key topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns • Affirmations • Recommendations • Evaluations <p>(5 – 7 Points)</p>	<p>Student fails to address each of the areas of the CARE Model and provides no follow up points under each area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns • Affirmations • Recommendations • Evaluations <p>(1 – 4 Points)</p>
Responses to Peer Comments and Recommendations	<p>Student describes comments from at least two peers (i.e., other students) regarding their Action Research Plan of Action, and identifies any revisions or changes made to their Action Research</p>	<p>Student describes comments from one student regarding their Action Research Plan and identifies any changes made to their plan as a result of the comments and suggestions.</p>	<p>Student describes one comment about their Action Research Plan but fails to identify what impact or changes resulting from the comments and suggestions.</p>

EDLD 5301 Research
Leanne Knight 8027

	Plan based on the comments and suggestions. (3 Points)	(2 Points)	(1 Point)
Site Supervisor(s) Conference and Consensus	<p>Students provide a description of their conference with their site supervisor(s) to discuss and attempt to agree on the Action Research Plan. The description includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened during the conference (who, when, where, what happened)? • Identify highlights or key insights from the conference • Describe any changes or revisions made to the Action Research Plan as a result of the conference <p>(3 Points)</p>	<p>Students provide a brief description of the conference with the site supervisor(s) but only addresses two of the critical components. Those components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened during the conference (who, when, where, what happened)? • Identify highlights or key insights from the conference • Describe any changes or revisions made to the Action Research Plan as a result of the conference <p>(2 Points)</p>	<p>Students provide a partial description of the conference with the site supervisor(s).</p> <p>(1 Point)</p>
Assignment Mechanics	<p>Responses are relevant to course content; no errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation. Students demonstrate proper APA style.</p> <p>(3 Points)</p>	<p>Responses are relevant to course content; few errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation.</p> <p>(2 Points)</p>	<p>Responses do not reflect knowledge of course content, lack clarity and depth, and/or include multiple errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.</p> <p>(1 Point)</p>

Week Four Assignment, Part 1 – Strategies to support and sustain action research

You now have your draft Action Research Plan, but this plan is a guide, a blueprint, and like most blueprints, it may need to be reviewed, revised and improved. This activity should provide you with some strategies to address this ongoing review process. Please read Chapter 8, Sustaining Improvement, in the Harris et al. text, pp. 91 – 103, and specifically focus on Strategies for Sustaining Improvement, pp. 94 – 97, and briefly describe:

- **Force Field Analysis**
- **Delphi Method**
- **Nominal Group Technique**

Write a brief reflection on what you learned from examining these three strategies – describe any ways you might be able to use these strategies.

Rubric

Complete Part 1 of the assignment below. The box will expand as you type.

Force Field Analysis

To make an informed decision you must understand the driving factors that influence a situation or decision. It is important to be informed about the “forces” for and against a decision.

For me the force field analysis would be beneficial whenever working with implementing any new technology. We all like to be informed about the forces for or against. For example, I am implementing a 1-1 laptop initiative at my school. I am doing surveys and interviews to know what forces will help this program be a success and what might prove to be a hindrance.

Delphi Method

Works to continue improvement and look future.

I often send out surveys to my teachers. I recently sent out a survey to the teachers regarding their readiness and feelings about going to a 1-1 environment. I will then collect all the responses and share with the teachers. Teachers can then create a synthesis on this topic. Later we can create common synthesis. To continue with the Delphi Method I would then send the list of synthesized ideas back out to them to rank. I would then collect the ranked ideas and create an average for the teachers to re-rank.

Nominal Group Technique

Is a multi step process to work towards future improvement.

Without discussion I would have each grade level quietly create a list of needs and issues concerning our 1-1 laptop initiative.

Without any discussion, I would each teacher share their thoughts. I would write down each comment using the Promethean Board,

At this point we would have a grade level discussion of each person's needs and issues.

I would then ask the team members to redraft their needs and issues that were from the first step. Team members would rank their issues/needs.

Week Four Assignment, Part 2

The Harris et al. text provides an excellent model to help leaders sustain what is working well, while supporting or building strategies for future improvement.

Review Tool 8.1 CARE Model: Planning Tool and complete the form explaining how your Action Research Plan corresponds to each of the tools of the CARE Model: (e.g., identifying what future focused concerns will be addressed by your Action Research Plan; describe at least three positive aspects of your current campus that need to be sustained to support the Action Research Plan; describe how your Action Research Plan has SMART recommendations or goals; and identify how you will evaluate your Action Research Plan).

The CARE Model review will provide you with a strong rationale and framework to enrich your Action Research Plan conference with your site supervisor.

Examining What We Do to Improve Our Schools Sandra Harris, Stacey Edmonson, Julie Combs

Tool 8.1 CARE Model: Planning Tool

Identify Concerns that must change (look to the future)

(Assign points to concerns from 1 to 3 in the order of the most important issues to consider.)

1. Teacher “buy in” to the one-to-one environment. Need to ensure teachers want this proposal to be a success. It is important that the teachers are excited and want this to work otherwise it is destined for failure from the beginning.
2. Teacher professional development and utilization of lessons created. It is important that teachers understand how to utilize a 1-1 correctly. Teachers need to understand and be able to implement a program that addresses the curriculum and not the technology. Seamless integration needs to occur through strong professional development. I have asked the school to purchase *1-1 Learning: Laptop programs that really work* through ISTE since it has practical applications for the teachers. The principal and I plan on instituting study groups to entail *Rethinking education in the age of technology* by Allan Collins and *Education nation* written by Milton Chen. the use of Moodle forums, we are planning on having a book study
3. Ensure the technology infrastructure will be ready to handle an extra 200 laptops on the wireless. The technology will only work as fast as the infrastructure is in place. Working with the district technology department is integral for success. Without the infrastructure in place the teachers and students will be frustrated when the technology they want to use won't work or work slowly.

Identify Affirmations that must be sustained (look to the present)

(Assign points to affirmations from 1 to 3 in the order of the most important issues to consider.)

1. Our principal is extremely appreciative and supportive of technology utilization and improvement. With the principal, I have been able to talk with our gift committee and receive the funding for this venture. She is also leading study groups to help with the proper implementation of the laptop program.
2. Our school has wonderful teacher mentors that will work with other teachers. It is important that the other teachers have a colleague to go to in real time. Since I can't always be in their rooms throughout the day, it is important they have a knowledgeable colleague to mentor them through this program especially in the beginning.

EDLD 5301 Research
Leanne Knight 8027

3. A staff that is willing to go to professional development and learn new and innovative technologies.

SMART Recommendations that must be implemented:

(Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely)

(Assign points to recommendations from 1 to 3 in the order of the most important recommendations to implement.)

1. I specifically designed it for Language Arts in 3rd and 4th grades. I would not have to create and implement testing or benchmarks since 3rd and 4th grades are state testing years.
2. Since half of third and half of fourth will receive the one to one laptop pilot I will be able to compare data from the same school. I will be able to evaluate the data from the three third grade classes receiving one to one compared to those of the third grade classes not on the one to one pilot; same method with fourth grade.
3. This is definitely timely since we will begin our laptop initiative in February and do a full twelve class rollout within the next two years.

EVALUATE – Specifically and Often

(Identify the best ways to evaluate the implemented recommendations.)

1. Since my monitored groups will be in third and fourth grades they will be doing benchmarks continually throughout the year. I can compare the data from laptop classes with the data from classes without the laptops.
2. Since I am observing third and fourth grades, they will be doing state testing. I can compare the data from 2009 to 2010. If time permits, I will be able to compare data from 2010 to 2011. I can compare the data from laptop classes with the data from classes without the laptops.
3. It is important to look through the data to guide the rollout of the computers and to ensure appropriate classroom lessons are taking place.

Week Four Assignment, Part 3 – Peer suggestions and revisions

We ask that you develop your blog and participate in the Discussion Boards to try to provide you some opportunities to learn from your peers. We strongly recommend that you continue to share your action research plan, process and progress throughout the completion of your project. You will learn from this sharing. As you progress with your research, your professors hope to assist you by linking you to similar action research projects. For example, if you have decided to research the question, “How can block scheduling improve classroom instruction?,” we will make every effort to connect you to all of the other action research projects examining block scheduling.

At this point, we ask you to review at least two comments about your Action Research Plan from your blog and identify or describe any changes or revisions you might make in your plan based on the feedback.

In writing your reflections on these comments, be sure to identify the comments that caught your attention and describe how these comments contributed to any revisions of your action research plan. If comments indicated that you should keep the plan as is, please describe what was shared that led you to not change your plan.

Rubric

Complete Part 3 of the assignment below. The box will expand as you type.

I have received several comments through Epic and through my blog. Two of the comments helped me with my Action Research topic. I realized after reading Joanaly Ramirez's response that I was definitely on the right course of study when she stated on November 28th, "What a great research topic and idea, Leanne! As a third grade teacher, I would love to work on a classroom like that. I think this research can bring light to all the issues regarding Language Arts and educational technology integration. Most teachers find it difficult to integrate technology into the Language Arts program for mainly two reasons, lack of time and technology resources, and the student's preparation for the state tests, especially in third grade. Providing each of the students with their own laptop, will develop the opportunity to demonstrate how the integration of educational technology influences the student's performance on the state tests." Her affirmation helped me to realize that the action research I plan on conducting would be beneficial for more than the teachers at my school.

I also found an area that I had not taken into account. Barbara Grayson commented on December 3rd, "Your project sounds like a worthy undertaking. You also have several sources of data to compare before and after the project. I wonder if the students will be interviewed or surveyed in some way to include their perceptions about technology use." I appreciated her response since I have interviewed parents and teachers. I have surveyed parents and teachers. I have not discussed this important decision with the group it will impact the most.

During this journey I have realized that I cannot do this alone. I need to discuss Action Research with my supervisors and with colleagues to get the best possible results.

Week Four Assignment, Part 4 – Site Supervisor Conference and Consensus on your Action Research Plan

Throughout this course, we have asked you to collaborate with your site supervisor(s) in designing and implementing your action research plan. During Week Four, we hope you will be able to schedule an appointment with your site supervisor(s) to review your action research plan. Try to reach consensus on the action research topic and plan.

Describe the conference, review your draft Action Research Plan using your Tool 7.1 template or your SIP/PIP template. Be sure to identify any recommended changes or revisions, and then submit the agreed upon Action Research Plan and your Intern Plan into your E-Portfolio. The submission to the Electronic Portfolio should be completed by Week Five.

For Part 4 of this week's assignment, write a description of your conference with your site supervisor(s), include insights into what was discussed, and identify any revisions to your Action Research Plan and template.

Rubric

Complete Part 4 of the assignment below. The box will expand as you type.

On Tuesday, December 7, 2010 at 2:30. Robert Harris and I met in a conference room which also is used as a literacy library. I must admit that next time I meet with my site supervisor I will pick one of the conference rooms which does not have a secondary purpose. Using the Literacy Library at the end of the day when teachers are preparing for the following instructional day and collecting materials, was not the best thought out idea. Needless to say, we were interrupted several times by very well meaning teachers needing their guided reading materials. We were also interrupted by those needing books but who also wanted realized the district technology coordinator and the campus technologist were meeting in private behind closed doors.

Robert and I had a great discussion about my topic and this assignment has made our professional relationship stronger. We have an assigned discussion topic to control our discussion which created an organized dialogue possible. Often, Robert and I can get off topic rather easily. With this topic we tried to complete our idea gathering and sharing in a manner to which helped both of us. I was able to discuss the plans and strategies my school planned on utilizing with the 1-1 program. Robert was interested in learning about how I planned to collect the data. One aspect that we decided to update on the Action Research Plan was on conducting a benchmark technology test. We are going to use the district 5th grade technology benchmark with our 4th graders in May and again next year in May to compare the data.

We also discussed and agree that it was important when beginning a 1-1 that the teachers understand it is not about the tool but about learning. We need to focus on the content we are working on with our students and use the laptops as a seamless tool for integration. We need to not focus on the technology.

Blog – Also post your agreed upon Action Research Plan and encourage others to post comments as you continue to describe the process and progress implementing the plan.

<http://knightl.blogspot.com/>